

Related Events:

All events are free and open to the public.

Exhibition Reception:

Sunday, October 6, 3-5 pm

Oli Watt in the Much Much More Program Series

Humboldt Park Public Library

Saturday, December TBD, 3 pm

Watt presents a slide lecture on his work and joins a discussion with Much Much More Program organizer, Philip Von Zweck.

About the Artist:

Oli Watt (b. 1968) is a Chicago-based artist and educator. Exhibitions of his work have been presented at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Spencer Brownstone, New York, Rocket Gallery, London, and the Terra Museum of American Art, Chicago. His work has been published and received reviews in Art on Paper, Art US, New Yorker, New Art Examiner, and the Village Voice. Watt is the recipient of the Maxine and Stuart Applebaum Award of Excellence and the Tweed Museum of Art Purchase Award. Watt received a MFA in printmaking from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he has been Adjunct Assistant Professor since 2003.

Hyde Park ARTCENTER

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Hyde Park Art Center is a unique resource that advances contemporary visual art in Chicago by connecting artists and communities in unexpected ways. The Art Center is funded in part by the: Alphawood Foundation; Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs; and Special Events; Field Foundation of Illinois; Harpo Foundation; Harper Court Arts Council; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Irving Harris Foundation; The Joyce Foundation; Leo S. Guthman Fund; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; Polk Bros. Foundation; Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust; and the generosity of people like you.

Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

Gallery 5

September 22 - January 12, 2014

Oli Watt: here comes a regular



Oli Watt, *Pretty Vacant*, 2013, neon, 14 x 23 x 5 1/2 inches

Here comes a regular is the first exhibition surveying the clever and puzzling work by Chicago-based artist Oli Watt. Once described as the unsung hero of appropriation, Watt has been producing and exhibiting prints, sculptures, installations and neon works since 1999 that employ a unique brand of situational comedy to shift our perception of pop culture.



Installation view of here comes a regular

Humor can also be very disarming. Laughter often seems to be an instinctual reflex of being forced into a moment of confusion, anxiety, fear, or discomfort. I'm drawn to this confusion. Why did I laugh at that event, object, or moment? On reflection, it might not be funny at all.

'I've always considered the time I spend watching cartoons with my kids as my primary "research." The inventions and conventions of that impossible two-dimensional world are really seductive. Sometimes I see something in the narrative and just know that it can exist in actual space. Then I try to figure out how to make it. (Watt)

Watt generates his artwork from the desire to make real the fictional objects that mark pivotal or humorous moments encountered in personal history narratives and mass media, such as novels, films, and music. Trained as a printmaker, he applies linoleum cut, wood block and screenprint techniques to create the surface of the work that ultimately becomes as-

sembled and sculptural. Store receipts, wine bottles, playing cards, coathangers, and McDonald's hamburger wrappers are examples of the average material goods Watt gravitates towards to remake by hand.

Whenever I'm engaged with a text, I try to pay attention to objects or concepts that help drive the story but might be forgotten as the narrative progresses. Sometimes, it feels very selfish, in that I pick and choose where I point my lens regardless of how the rest of the audience experiences these props. But it's not that different than other artists engaging their materials. (Watt)



Oli Watt, Legacy Suites, 2003, screenprints, dimensions variable

Here comes a regular is held in conjunction with A Study in Midwestern Appropriation, in which Watt is also a participant, to explore in depth the work of the notable local artist who influences the artistic production of his peers and emerging artists.

*All quotes from Oli Watt come from a conversation between Watt, David Robbins and Andrew Swant included in the catalog for A Study in Midwestern Appropriation.

Oli Watt
Snowmelt
2009
Assembled
screenprint,
Dimensions
variable

